




A LITTLE
BOOK OF
VERSE

A, LAURENCE
THOMSON



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A. LAURENCE THOMSON

AMISFIELD

HAMILTON

CANADA

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“If instead of a gem, or even a flower, we could
cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a
friend, that would be giving as the angels do.”—

George MacDonald.



A LITTLE BOOK OF VERSE.

A fern, a frosted pane,
A shell, a peacock's feather,
Spring flowers, a sprig of heather,
'Twixt clouds a bit of blue,
The moon when it is new,
Are common things, yet oft to me
They bring a thrill of ecstasy,
I try to tell thee why, in vain.

MORNING AT BURLINGTON.
HEAD OF LAKE ONTARIO.

Angels pass to and fro,
And with their wings fan out the stars' soft glow,
And, looking on the moon's sweet paling face,
they say,
"The mystery of the night gives place to day."

The trees all heard,
And tremulously the dewy leaves are stirred;
Bird voices their ecstatic notes prolong,
God's choristers pour forth their morning song.

And angel hands,
In flushing eastern skies, undo the bands
Of purpling amethyst, and open gates of pearl,
And agate windows, and gemmed clouds unfurl.

And o'er Ontario's face
The colours of the flaming banners chase,
And streets of gold come down her sapphire way,
On which descends from heaven another day

WINTER SUNSHINE.

Where the short wintry day lies dying
Afar upon the hills I see soft lying
A light of gold. It falls from out a rift
In clouds that for a moment drift
Apart. The faded fields and sombre woods,
Where drear December's spirit broods
Aneath this smile from wintry skies
A picture on the hill-side lies.

And, for a brief sweet space
Its shifting panoramic grace
Upon my spirit wields a power,
Born of the memory of an hour
Of days long gone. I no longer stand
Within my room, but in a sunny land
I walk, with flowers, and birds and skies for
 ever blue,
And all the bliss that youth's enchantment knew.

AUTUMN DAYS.
AT HEAD OF LAKE ONTARIO.

The robin's note again
The soft green of the year's spring-time
Blended with gold ; the scarlet stain
Of summer's richer colourings
On foliage seen, and over all
The sunbeams from the same sun fall.
Thus in the year's maturer life
Are carried days of May,
And painted with the summer's glow
The leaves about our way.

* * * *

A misty greyness fills and veils the skies
Like unshed tears in brightest eyes.
And 'gainst the shore Ontario's waves do sigh,
Hushing my heart with their soft lullaby,
And yet there is a glory in the air
A halo falling softly everywhere.

* * * *

Ontario with a sullen roar
Throws her mad waves against the shore,
The clouds pour down their tears.
The winds bring gusts of sobbing rain
The trees bend down as if in pain,
The leaves die of their fears.
The flowers, Ah ! me, still sweet in death,
They yield in faith their perfumed breath.

Afar dear summer stands and waits
 Beside the opening southern gates.
 One backward look, and from her face
 There comes a glow of radiant grace
 That fills the earth and gilds the skies
 With glory, from her parting eyes.

*4 lights the room the fading year
 the day the summer still is here*

OH, LILACS STAY.

Oh ! Lilacs stay.

And with your breath waft all my cares away.

And for the time make me to stand

Once more in that enchanted land—

My youth.

Oh ! Lilacs stay, with all the visions that you bring

When I was young and it was Spring !

Oh ! Lilacs stay.

And let your perfumed power sway

My Autumn heart, my pulses fill

With the ecstatic rapturous thrill

Of youth.

Oh ! Lilacs stay, pour out your incense by my way,

For with you it is always May !

WHILE WE SLEPT.

After the day had vanished,
And the twilight died away,
The angels spread the snow-clouds
Of the softest fleecy grey.

Over the stars they drew them
Hiding the moon's calm face;
And close to the earth's dark edges,
Draped their borders misty grace.

The night-winds moved among them,
With wintry breath formed fair,
And the tiny, fragile atoms,
That came falling thro' the air.

Falling in ceaseless silence,
Myriads of stars so white,
Exquisite shapes of crystal,
Born of the winter's night.

Falling on earth's bare bosom,
Robing each desolate part;
Fold after fold falling o'er her,
And the flowers that sleep in her heart.

Where the mountains stand for ever,
With reverent heads uplift;
It fell in a whitened splendour,
In many a glistening rift.

It transformed the dark old forests
 Into huge cathedrals fair,
Of glorious architecture,
 Fit place for Nature's prayer.

On the outstretched arms of cedars,
 In adoring silence bent;
It fell like a benediction,
 By the hands of angels sent.

The winds were hushed ere the dawning;
 The clouds all called away;
And the earth in her pure adorning,
 Waited the coming day.

A MEMORY.

A meadow with smell of sweet clover ;
A stream that will oft ripple over
To caress on its edge the long grasses
That fringe it in tangled green masses.

Where you hear the first bird-call at dawning—
The prelude to welcome the morning ;
Where you see the most exquisite blending
Of colours the gold sun is sending ;
Where the first light he flashes will greet you
And straight paths of gold come to meet you.
All day this sweet meadow rejoices
In sunshine, and shade, and bird voices.

Then, when the day has its ending,
Falls a hush like a blessing descending ;
The breath of the night is distilling
Soft dewdrops, the pale sky is filling
With stars, the dear moon moves slowly
And the earth that we stand on seems holy.

SPRING AT BURLINGTON.

I heard low notes of early birds
Who speak in music, not in words,
Calling me, and I rose to see
What Nature only showed to me,
Or those whose hearts responsive thrill
In unison with her sweet will.

I saw a graceful form and fair
With dewdrops shining in her hair,
With robe of silken shaded green
Woven of sun and shower, I ween.

Her feet with golden sandals laced
Their impress on the grass I traced,
For everywhere they touched the earth
A yellow dandelion had birth.

Her hands and arms of perfect mould
Sweet blossoms to her bosom hold,
I saw their lustrous, waxy sheen
'Gainst background of an evergreen,
And buds and crumpled opening leaves
She deftly fastens on the trees.

I followed, and the waiting wood
 Soon felt the influence of her mood.
 Her warm breath set the streamlets free,
 Her sweet voice waked the minstrelsy
 Of birds, the colours that she gave the moss
 And threw the wakening hills across
 And painted on the faces sweet
 Of myriad flowers at her feet,
 No other artist ever knows,
 No other canvas ever shows.

Ere the full light of coming day
 In the misty dawn she fled away.
 I saw her cross the shimmering lake
 With shining showers in her wake,
 And dropping down from Heaven's blue
 The soft clouds hid her from my view.
 But on the other shore I see
 Her heavenly tints on earth and tree.
 Sweet picture in my heart, Oh stay!
 Thy memory glorifies my way.

NIAGARA.

Two POWERS.

The daring Frost King came and laid his way
Across Niagara's seething green abyss—
And stayed with wondrous silent power
Her raging breast.

And at her feet he reared with stealthy might,
Fair palaces of ice pillar and dome
Fastened his banners in fantastic shapes
Upon her brow.

Huge glittering, chiselled columns hung
Against her cliffs, and thro' the white demesne
Tall snowy statues stood—goddess and knight
In shield and hood.

And with enchanted spell he wrought till earth,
And tree and shrub, each tiny slenderest twig
Drooped, veiled in white, in work of filagree
With diamonds set.

And from beneath the Frost King's bar, and o'er
Her jasper wall, Niagara poured her flood
Under the crystal way, with muffled roar
And anthem low.

And from the blue above the shining rays,
Mixt with the mist, and made each drop a gem,
A rainbow air, and laid God's bow across,
From end to end.

FRIENDSHIP.

I have a thought most sweet, that lies
Within my heart, and makes it rise
On wings of joy, and lifts my spirit far
From care. This thought is like a shining star,
A flower, a gentle presence which restrains
Ungentle ways. Ah me, how sweet its claims !
What beauty to my pathway does it lend !
You love me, and have called yourself my friend.

THY BIRTHDAYS.

Dear days ! So full of memories precious and glad,
 Not one in all the years gone by seems sad ;
 Though clouds on other days have often been,
 Ever on these the rainbow I have seen.

Dear days ! gathered from out the years,
 Speak wisely to our listening ears,
 We'll count them fewer one by one.
 Earth's birthdays flee,
 The stealthy feet of time sound not
 Beyond life's sea.

But there, on some glad morn, we may
 (When freed from earth we go away)
 A happier Birthday have, in Heaven,
 And endless day to us be given.

BURNS' MONUMENT AT DUMFRIES.

With bare uncovered head he sits,
 And thoughtful face ;
 One hand within his bosom's folds,
 And one with homely grace
 Some scattered daisies holds.

And round like vast old sentine's
 The reverent mountains rise,
 The storied Covenanters' hills
 Outlined against the skies.

Keep watch, and from their rugged sides,
 The heather tribute flings ;
 And down through all the lovely land
 The Nith his requiem sings.

And on the graven stone I read,
 'Twix joy, and pain and tears,
 His words that fuller meaning take
 Down all the changing years.

Sublimest truths, so simply writ
 Divine, the pathos caught,
 Oh, poet heart, to me it seems,
 Thou wert of Heaven taught.

Inscribed on Monument.

“The hairt is aye the pairt aye
That makes us right or wrang.”

“To make a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife,
This is the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.”

“Man’s inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn.

“Affliction’s sons are brothers in distress,
A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss.”

“It’s coming yet for a’ that
That man to man the world o’er,
Shall brothers be an’ a’ that.”

MORNING, AT BRIDGE OF ALLAN.

The Abbey Craig stands dark and grand,
The monument in keeping,
While up the beauteous Eastern sky
The morning light is creeping.

And Scotland's hills, which many a heart
Has sung in song and story,
With hoary heads uplift to God,
Take on a sudden glory.

The mists fall off, and hands of gold
Caress their rugged faces,
And violet halo's in the air,
Illume the heathery places.

Grim Stirling feels the enchanted spell,
And smiles, the past forgotten;
It seems a myth her history old,
Of bloody deeds begotten.

Where marching armies had their tread,
The sun, the sweet vale kisses.
Where Forth, and Teith, and Allan wind,
No slanting sunbeam misses.

Oh, hills, and mist, and rock, and vale,
The sacred hour of dawning,
Has added to thy power to charm,
The miracle of morning.

NIAGARA.

The spell began before I saw thee ;
 Before thy matchless beauty dawned upon
 my eyes,
 I heard thy voice in one unceasing anthem,
 I saw thy incense rising to the skies,
 And when I stand entranced before thee,
 I long to kneel, to worship, and adore thee.

Breathless I pause, filled with surprise ecstatic,
 With flashing thoughts suggested by thy glorious
 Temple magnificent—Divine hands made thee
 The vestibule of Revelation's story.
 Oh wondrous scene, faint emblem of God's power,
 An atom on thy banks I stand,
 The creature of an hour.

ATHOL BANK.

Outlined about the poet's door,
 And stretching to the eaves
A slender vine still held its place
 Still wore its summer leaves.
In vain the wintry blast had tried
To push its clinging hold aside.

So we in winter's days may stretch
 Our tendrils to the eaves,
May turn the page of memory back
 And wear our summer leaves.

Our hearts the winter's chill refuse
And cling till spring our life renews.
Then deem it not an idle thought
The lesson that the vine has taught.

SOMETIMES.

Sometimes a flash—a flame
Illumes my way, and I
Stand young again.

Sometimes I think, forsooth,
If I could have one wish
I would choose youth.

Sometimes I think, in truth,
Beyond is spring, and death
The way to youth.

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

The Prince of Life my shepherd is,
My wants He all supplieth ;
He ever guards me by His love
And only ill denieth.

He chooseth for me pastures green,
And there my soul He feedeth,
And where the quiet waters flow
His own Hand gently leadeth.

My fainting soul He seeks and then
With His own Life reviveth,
And from Him in the path of Life
The power to walk deriveth.

No shadow in the vale I fear
Athwart my pathway lying ;
Thy rod, Thy staff my comfort are—
Thyself with me in dying.

Such rich provision for me made
Thy care beyond all knowing ;
Thy Hand anoints, my cup of joy
Thou fill'st to overflowing.

And all the days, Oh ! crowning Love,
Twin angels ever guiding ;
And in Thy House my home shall be
For ever there abiding.

THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-
FIRST PSALM.

Shall I for safety to the hills
Lift up expectant eyes ?
Above, beyond to God I'll look
Maker of earth and skies.

My faltering feet He'll firmly set,
Securely walk I ever.
God's people all are safely kept
Because He sleepeth never.

Fear not, thy keeper is the Lord,
His shade thy sheltered rest ;
Safe shalt thou be from scorching sun
And in the night be blest.

Lest any hurt thee, He will watch,
Thy soul be harmed shall never ;
Thy escort going out and in
For ever and for ever.

“FOR, LO, THE WINTER IS GONE.”

Why should I a prisoner be ?
 Why not walk at liberty ?
 Why sit I in gloom apart ?
 Why this winter in my heart ?

Smiling back to heaven's blue
 See the earth her work renew.
 See the warm rains wash away
 Fetters from the fecund clay.

See the golden power start
 A rich dower from her heart.
 Hear her now a new song sing
 Of the glories of the spring.

Be thou eager, oh ! my soul,
 To resist the foe's control ;
 Answer to God's beams divine
 As the earth to skies that shine.

Straighten from thy posture low,
 Waken from thy sleep to grow—
 Waken from thy gloom to sing
 Like the new-born earth in spring.

THE OLD STORY.

Last of the dying year
With withered leaf and sere.

The dear Christ-month is here
Holding a day so dear.

Day of the Heavenly name
When to earth Heaven came.

When to her wondering eyes
Opened the midnight skies.

When on her ravished ear
Fell angel voices clear.

When glory shone around
Making it holy ground.

Christmas we welcome thee
With thy deep mystery.

Meaning of which we pray
Show to our hearts to-day.

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

The light of moon, the gold of star,
The thought of wise men from afar,
The sighing voices of the pine,
The everlasting hills outline,
The shepherds in the silent night,
The angel choir, the heavenly light,
The glory on the Judean hills,
With sacred thought the memory fills.
Down all the years of strife and pain,
The cradled Christ comes back again,
With every Holy Christmas Morn,
The world still sings a Saviour born.

God's gift to man—shall we not then
Accept this gift of Love? Amen.

GLAD TIDINGS.

The light of ineffable glory,
The words of ineffable love,
The exquisite singing of angels,
From the heavenly choir above,
The fields in the quiet of midnight,
The flocks with the shepherds around,
The night of such wondrous revealing,
Again in my heart are they found.
Again it returns to my vision,
That far Eastern scene yet so near ;
For time ever brings it back to me
When the dawning of Christmas is here.
Tho' I hear not the song of the Angels,
Tho' I see not the glory as then,
The message of Love remains ever,
Peace and good-will toward men.

NEW YEAR.

The feet of time lead on ; a new year dawns ;
And as of old the Heavens His glory teach
To each new day and night is given speech ;
To earth and skies and stars and sun
To tell His love till time is done.

And shall not we with hearts adoring sing
Our glad Hosannas to our Lord and King,
And through the opening gates of this New Year,
Go up with gladness in His love and fear,
Trusting in Him who all our future sees,
And enter thro' its portals on our knees.

A LITTLE PILLOW

Yes, I know He is all-wise,
So, my sin He quick descries ;
Yes, I know He has all power,
So could punish any hour.
Yes, I know He sees alway,
So no night can hide my way.
Yes, I know His name is Love,
That sweet title is above
 All my knowing, so my song—
 How can anything go wrong ?

I WILL BE AS THE DEW UNTO ISRAEL.

Suppose when God had made the earth,
 And given the whole creation birth,
 Had stayed His Hand and let no rain
 Or dew descend on hill or plain.
 Can we conceive what it would mean :
 No fragrant flower, no blade of green,
 No sheltering tree, no field of corn,
 No cooling streams, no dewy morn,
 No rainbow scarf, no floating cloud,
 No grandeur of the thunder loud,
 No song of birds, no children's mirth,
 No beauty in the loveless earth.

Suppose when God creates anew
 A heart, and then withholds the dew
 Of heavenly promise. It means the same, oh,
 heart
 To thee, for thou as much dependant art
 Upon His grace, His quickening power,
 As earth on dew, and freshening shower.

THE GUEST OF A NIGHT.

IN MEMORIAM: R. B. MAC Q————

“Weeping may come in to lodge at even, but joy cometh in the morning.”—*Revised Version, margin.*

Be still, my heart, it is thy time for weeping ;
 Throw wide thy door, 'tis at the King's
 command ;
 This dark unwelcome guest an entrance seeking
 Bears the King's royal warrant in his hand.
 Sorrow and tears He bids thee entertain,
 And all the night is filled with fear and pain.

Be calm, my heart, see thro' thy blinding tears
 The order written by the King's own Hand—
 “Cometh in to lodge,” put by thy shrinking fears,
 Quarter for one brief night is the demand.
 E'en now the rain a lighter moan is taking,
 And in the east the morning light is breaking.

Rise up, my heart, look forth upon the dawning :
 See the morn eterne in radiant colours drest !
 The warrant reads, “Joy cometh in the morning,”
 For ever to abide, no passing guest,
 Child of the light, thou wilt abide away,
 From thy bright presence sorrows flee away.

SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1863.

He held me to his heart, and said,
“We need not from the summer part,
For love makes always summer in the heart.”
September dawned and we were wed.

The dawning brightens into fuller light,
And dreams have vanished with the night,
Our eager spirits thrill again to meet
A new day, living is so sweet.

A little angel boy came to my home
To live with me, to be my very own,
I tended him with loving care each day,
At night safe folded in my arms he lay

MY DARLING'S LETTER.

There is a time when I defy
 The power of wintry weather,
When wind and rain and darkening sky
 May do their best endeavour
To hide the sunshine from my heart ;
 And can accomplish never,
When I refuse to let their sway
 My eager spirit fetter ;
It is when to my door there comes
 My darling darling's letter.

21ST MAY.—MY DARLING'S BIRTHDAY.

To-day my thoughts are wishes fond for thee,
My wishes prayers, for human love will not avail

To shield from every woe,
Therefore I pray that Love Divine
May give what this poor heart of mine

Seeks vainly to bestow.
Thy love my life hath blest,
On thee God's favour rest,
God bless thee, dearest, best.

HALF-MAST.

From mountain to the lake the city lies unstirring,
 Enwrapped in mists,
 And 'gainst the grey shadows of the dawning dim
 There hangs weird, and dark, a token mute
 Yet ominous in meaning.

Somewhere, 'neath some roof there lies a loved one
 sleeping,
 Who will not wake again.
 No good-morning, howe'er tender, meets with
 response,
 No answering look in the dear eyes where the love-
 light
 Has gone out for ever.
 And the gloom of the beginning day suit well the
 dismayed hearts
 That fall half-mast in the face of this dread mystery.

 I look again,
 And lo ! a power called light touches the mists,
 Changes the gloom to gold, gilds steeple and roof,
 Grey shadows turn to radiant clouds,
 And the pennon no longer hangs motionless and
 black,
 For the sweet morning airs shake it out,
 And the light proves it to be crimson instead.

So, hearts half-mast run up above the clouds,
And in the sun of Love bask, and lave your wounds ;
Be healed with love of God, and in the light
That lighteth this dark world—
Clearly see.

GRIEF.

Yesterday the world was fair,
 The sun of love was shining on my way,
I went about my sweet accustomed care,
We said good-bye, to part not loath
Since the same world held us both.

To-day—Oh ! God, how dark to-day,
What is this avalanche of terror
 That o'erwhelms my way ?
Where is the light ? I cannot see,
 Is the sun shining anywhere ?
Are any glad, and feel as I did yesterday ?

To-morrow—Ah ! a sweet faint light
 Pierces the blackness of my night.
To-morrow—in that never-ending morrow,
 We meet again, after this night of sorrow

WILT THOU NOT WAKE ?

Will the Spring not wake thee, darling ?

Wilt thou no answer give ?

When the robin calls and sunlight thrills,

Wilt thou not wake and live ?

When the life from the pulsing heart of earth,

Breaks through the fecund sod,

And covers all things with living green

At the command of God.

Then thy Spring will come, my darling,

The sod on thy grave will break,

When the life of the Resurrection thrills,

Thou wilt hear and awake.

The dews of promise bathe thy grave,

God's Love will pierce its night,

Thou wilt arise at His call "Come forth !"

To everlasting Light.

EASTER MORNING.

Oh ! mists of earth ye vanish,
Transformed to rays of light,
Oh ! skies illumed ye banish,
The darkness of the night.

Oh ! hallowed morn returning
With joyous meaning rife,
Our souls from thee are learning
The mystery of Life.

We, from thy Holy teaching,
Know that there is no death,
For down through time far-reaching,
There comes a voice which saith—

“He is not here,” “He is risen,”
“So shall ye rise.” What then ?
The grave’s no more a prison,
Not death, but Life. Amen.

EASTER.

Arise ! let us watch in the dawning,
At the gates of the fair Easter Morning,
 See Angels preparing the way.
Pale, exquisite colours are shifting,
Arms of pure gold are uplifting
 The clouds for the entrance of day.
The shadows fold backward, concealing
The night in the new day's revealing.

Oh ! heart ! art thou rightly divining
The power of that light which is shining
 Since Angels the stone rolled away ?
The light of that Love, oh ! so tender
Beaming ever in undying splendour
 Through gates that stand open for aye.
In the light of that love shining ever
The shadows have vanished for ever.

LOVE'S MISTAKE IN SEEKING A DEAD CHRIST.

How oft we sorrow all the night,
And come like Mary in the dawning light
Bearing the spices sweet that we have bought,
Forgetting all the words we have been taught,
Seeking a Christ entombed. And, on the way,
We wonder who will roll the stone away.
We, from the shining Angels start
Affrighted back with breaking heart,
And do not know our Lord amid our gloom
And anguish that we find an empty tomb.
Oh, empty tomb, thy meaning teach thou me,
Thy glorious triumph and thy victory.
Because He rose, so life to faith is given,
Because He lived, so shall we live in Heaven.

OPPORTUNITY.

It is a thought both sweet and true
That every morning sent to you
 An angel comes, who on thy way
 Attends. Beside thee all the day
She walks. With sweet appealing gaze
She offers thee in countless ways
 An opportunity
So precious that, if once 'tis lost
The same again at any cost
 Can ne'er be given thee.

VALENTINE.

I wish thee liberty,
Not bound with what now seems to thee
But silken chains, yet in the end shall be
Too strong for thy weak hands to free.
I would have thee each day look
Within the lids of God's own Book.
There learn the freedom truth can give
To those who in His service live.
One word will what I wish define,
Darling, may Happiness be thine.

VALENTINE.

Like children folded in a mother's arms

Safe in the heart of earth the flowers sleep,
And dream of Spring's soft showers, of summer suns
Of white-winged clouds in skies of azure deep.

They soon will wake and lift their faces sweet
To greet us as we pass with careless feet.

Anew God's love will beautify the earth,

Another spring will open wide her gates,
Our vanished birds will come to us again
And sing their songs of love and choose their mates.
So choose I thee, to thee my song of love I sing,
Within thy soul may its soft cadence ring
And bid thy dreaming heart waken to mine
And be for ever my true Valentine.

JULY 9TH, 1885.

To-day the world her portals wide display
To bid thee enter, yet a moment stay
Before thy untried feet her threshold pass
And look with me in memory's magic glass,

Back to the happy days that you and I
Have spent together, when thy childhood's sky
Held no cloud that I could not soon beguile
And bring back sunshine with a mother's smile.

Thy past is mine, its treasured memories sleep
Within my heart, yet waken oft and keep
A joy to hold in secret, and thy future lies
In hands that surely hold both earth and skies.

OH ! HOLY BIRTHDAY.

Oh ! Holy Birthday, may thy power be wrought
Upon us, and whate'er of sin is fraught
In us, whate'er of sorrow or of pain
Banish, and let us all be born again.

LAURA.

Her face
Is lighted with angelic grace
Too good for earth ? Oh ! no,
We need such spirits here below.

SINCE JOSEPHINE CAME.

There is a beauty in the air
A brightness shining everywhere ;
The sun more gold, the sky more blue,
And all the world more good and true.

Her eyes like stars, her curls of gold
Like sunbeams light the garden old ;
The dark old pines bend low to bless
This darling in her loveliness.

Her dancing feet scarce touch the grass,
The flowers lean to let her pass
And smile upon her, and the trees
Like banners o'er her wave their leaves.

And what to my heart does she bring ?
She makes the wilderness to sing,
She peoples it with loved ones gone,
She brings them back with look and tone.

She looks at me with heavenly eyes,
Dead blossoms bloom, and from the skies
Loved ones come back. Oh ! it is sweet
To hear her voice their tones repeat.

When in the eve she kneels to pray
The angels are not far away,
And on the pillow lays her head
A halo seems to light the bed.

I fold her close within my arms,
God bless her for her many charms
Wherewith she makes my life so bright—
And then we softly say good-night.

SINCE JOSEPHINE WENT.

The joyous airs that 'mong the flowers play
Have lost their dancing mood and idly stray,
The flowers drooping miss her happy smile,
Birds call with softer note and listen for her while
The old pines sigh among their shadows deep.
The listless vines upon the trellis creep,
The sunlight's less of gold, the sky less blue,
The garden seems in twilight, tho' the day is new.
And I, alas, in vain I stand and wait
Beside the little green embowered gate.

JOSEPHINE'S BIRTHDAY.

ACROSTIC.

J ust when the earth began to feel
 O 'er her the season's power steal
 S he came. It seemed a radiance bright
 E nhanced each hour with new delight
 P erpetual pleasure bringing.
 H e said "A little child shall lead."
 I n His own Word 'tis thus we read.
 N ot vainly has His Word been given,
 E ach day she brings us nearer Heaven.

TO K.L.B.

The flowers and birds have something sweet to tell,
I hear it in a song of rapture swell,
And whispers tremble in the golden air
From perfumed hearts of flowers fair.
It is her wedding morn ; may all her future hours
Be glad as song of birds and pure as flowers.

TO I.W.C.

AN ACROSTIC.

N ew reasons why I love her,
E very day I con them over,
T he graces of her heart and mind
T o my heart so closely bind,
I n her eyes I mirrored see
E ver truth and purity.

TO KATHLEEN OF ST. JOHN'S MANSE.

Kathleen, when I think of thee,
All things lovely come to me,
Sweetest bonds about me cast
Of twining arms, that hold me fast,
Swift, light kisses, fall in showers
Thrilling me like touch of flowers.
Quickly give her velvet hands
All her loyal heart commands,
And I feel an ecstasy,
When her light feet turn to me.

Truly like a silvery rill
Is her sweet voice, and a thrill
Stirs my pulses languid beating
When I hear her laugh, and meeting
From her eyes, like sunbeams glancing,
Where the waves are ever dancing
Lights, that flit her fair face over,
Who could see her and not love her ?

MARION.

ACROSTIC.

Memory swiftly brings
A round my heart a lovely light,
Recalled by thy dear name.
I feel thy gentle power
On me like dew on flower,
New opened to the sun an hour.

21ST JUNE.

Oh ! day so fair can we forget thee ?
Love in the midst of beauty set thee !
With bluest skies, with fairest flowers,
Oh ! Perfect day of Summer hours.

The golden light enwrought with shade
A quaint embroidery hath made ;
Its witching movements on the grass,
Stirred by the scented airs that pass,
Beckon the coming of my feet,
Then farther fly in swift retreat,
Like long-gone memories glow and fade,
A magic scene of light and shade.

Oh ! Day so fair, can we forget thee ?
Love in the midst of beauty set thee.
With trees like tall cathedrals dim,
Where sweet-voiced birds sing chant and hymn,
Found in green books, whose many leaves
Are lightly turned by every breeze.

And so, in other climes you see,
That sky, and air, and bird, and tree,
And sun, and shade, and leaf, and flower
Speaks with a sweet though silent power.
Our listening hearts their message hear,
They tell us 'tis thy birthday, dear.

AN APRIL BIRTHDAY.

Yes, she is April's child ;
By the witchery of her flitting smile,
By which I am beguiled,
I know it.

And the sweet orders of her transient tears,
Which sway my hopes and fears,
Show it.

She is my April ;
She has banished Winter from my heart,
And in it, with her shine and showers,
Wakened Love's first flowers.

A MAY BIRTHDAY.

A birthday, and in May,
A double joy I used to say,
And I still think so, though 'tis long
Since Spring and I were young together.

For all the years of Autumn weather,
In vain may try to stay the power,
Of every scented sunlit hour
Of rapturous note, my robin's song.

A BIRTHDAY.

I do not know how many times
The bells have rung thy birthday chimes,
How many times loved ones have said,
“This is thy birthday and we’re glad,”
I only know morn’s flown too soon
And life is in the afternoon.

And on this day we seem to stand
With past, with future hand in hand ;
This day that has an open door,
To enter in the past once more,
And through its windows, too, we see
How closely lies eternity.

Blest be this day, and every day,
Of all thy years. ’Tis thus we pray.
Let no sad retrospect intrude.
Be glad, be glad, for God is good !
His love to us He lets us see
By giving lengthened days to thee.

TO AGNES.

FEBRUARY 14TH.

A greeting on this day to one I hold so dear,
What shall it be—a sigh, a wish, a tear?
A prayer that will enfold the three
Sent on a golden shaft of love to thee.

I send a tear, if thus I may
Save thy dear eyes from falling tears,
A sigh, if my heart's sighs can stay
All sighs from thine in future years.

But this were vain, to God I'll send the prayer
To guard thee, love thee, keep thee ever in His
care.

TO CAROLINE.

The flowers, with eloquence unspoken,
The love of God to us betoken ;
The happy birds their joy sing out
And tell God's love to all about.

The clouds, that sail in skies of blue
Are freighted with God's love to you ;
The light of the golden sun is above,
All other emblems He gives of His love.

M.M.C.—“FRIEND OF MY HEART.”

31ST MAY.

To-day sweet spring has kissed her buds,
And said goodbye to all her flowers,
And whispered to them of June's birth
Of warmer airs and shining hours.

And thus the faint regret we feel,
The fleeting touch of sorrow,
Is banished with this sweetest thought—
The summer comes to-morrow.

TO LILY.

VALENTINE.

Although the icy garb of snow
The earth still folds about her,
And not a sign of birds, or flowers,
Yet still thou must not doubt her.

For these sweet tokens that I send
These messengers to greet thee,
Are pledges that again the spring
And summer days will meet thee.

And by the same, Oh, fain would I
A deeper meaning tend thee,
Their perfumed breath will it reveal
My heart with them I send thee.

HAMILTON.

The mountain guards her to the South,
East, West, she stretches free,
And from the blue an open way
She finds to the far sea.

THE SEASONS.

A PARLOUR RECITATION IN COSTUME.

Tableau.

Father Time and the four Sister Seasons.

SPRING, SUMMER, AUTUMN, WINTER.

Introduction by Father Time.

I've heard it said when to the past
 A longing look is backward cast,
 That, thro' the far-off misty air
 Memory sees ever pictures fair
 Consoling hearts with joys so tender
 Their tears forget and only smiles remember.
 So, if the sorrows of the past are all forgotten,
 And joys alone remembered, need I fear
 To tell you that to-night I've brought you back
 a year
 Composed of lovely seasons four—
 This is the gift I have in store.

SPRING.

Do you not think, dear Father Time,
 Of all the year the sweet Spring-Time
 Is fairest, that the heart-strings beat
 With fuller strains of music sweet?
 It is like to a thought of heaven,
 That I this work of love am given.

I melt the snow in valleys deep,
 Its soft tears give the moss its green ;
 I kiss the dear earth in her sleep
 And seek to wake her from her dream.

I call south winds with flutt'ring wing
 To make the ripples on the stream.
 And o'er the meadow shadows fling
 With glints of flying gold between.

I haunt the spot where violets hide
 And stir the brown leaves on their bed.
 To let warm rays of Sunshine glide
 And lift the snowdrop's drooping head.

I whisper to the naked trees
 And tell them winter's reign is o'er.
 Their answer is ten thousand leaves
 The dress so often worn before.

I paint bright skies of blue above,
 And who like I the heart can thrill
 And bring back youth, and truth, and love,
 With lilac scent and daffodil ?

FATHER TIME.

I know, dear Spring, no other time
 Has such a subtle charm as thine,
 When o'er the earth thou throwst a screen
 Of tiny blades of upright green.

Young hearts glow and haste to meet
 With dancing steps thy coming feet,
 And pulses stayed by sorrow's chill,
 Thou hast indeed a power to thrill.
 No other flowers can ever bring
 The joy of thy first flowers, Oh Spring !

SUMMER.

Count not the time of Spring the dearest,
 Oh, Father Time ! until thou hearest
 How I, with love, and joy, and singing,
 Prolong the work of Spring's beginning.

I breathe upon her opening leaves,
 And smooth them out with satin shine,
 And deepen their pale tints of green
 And trace a wider, firm outline.

I send soft airs to woo her buds,
 And make them into beauteous flowers ;
 With honeyed hearts where bird and bee
 Do revel in the summer hours.

I make the silken tassels neath
 The coverings which the corn enfold ;
 I watch the fields of waving green ;
 And some I turn to fields of gold.

My Royal Crown, my regal rose,
 Its heavenly perfume fills the air,
 With an unsparing hand I give,
 And fling my treasures everywhere.

I have a balm for tired hearts,
 Of all I have I give the best ;
 I lure with sunshine, shade and shower
 In summer's heart of love to rest.

FATHER TIME.

Dear Summer, it is also true,
 That thou hast many beauties too ;
 That thou, for opening bud and leaf,
 An added charm of beauty keep ;
 Thou hast the power to soothe the pain
 Of many an o'er-wrought tired brain ;
 Who from the City's langour flies
 To Summer fields, 'neath Summer skies :
 The magic of thy wand of gold
 Is like a miracle of old.

AUTUMN.

I pray thee keep dear Father Time
 Some word of love for work of mine ;
 My flowers, I know can never bring
 The ecstasy of flowers of Spring.

But their pale beauty long is dead,
 The Summer roses all have fled ;
 Mine will remind you of the past,
 Oh take of me, I give the last.

I haste with joyful steps to bring
 My treasures from the yielding earth.
 I pour my gifts with lavish hand
 With sound of grateful harvest mirth.

I bring the corn, the fruit, the vine,
 With purple grapes, the crimson pod
 Of bitter-sweet, the rowan bright
 And way-side flowers of golden-rod.

I to the forests haste, ere yet
 By Winter's hand of beauty shorn ;
 Them, like to royal kings of old
 In gorgeous raiment I adorn.

And then I lull the resting earth
 With magic days of hazy gold ;
 And stir the heart's imaginings,
 With song of robin as of old.

FATHER TIME.

Not words, but love itself I give thee,
 For all the gifts thy bounty brings me.
 I thank thee for thy sad sweet task
 To hide as with a brilliant mask

The fading flower, the leaf now sere,
 The emblems of the dying year ;
 Before them yields 't to Winter's reign
 To coax the Summer back again,
 And stir with thought "beyond all telling"
 The heart, with song of robin swelling.

WINTER.

Oh ! tell me that it's not in vain
 To seek a thought of thine to gain ;
 Oh ! trust me that my heart's not cold
 Tho' icy garments me enfold ;
 In this work of love I share
 My burden of the year I bear.

The wearied earth now turns to me
 When Autumn's brilliancy has fled,
 I call the swift winds to my aid
 With withered leaves to strew her bed.

The North wind brings me soft white flakes
 To make a covering warm and deep,
 No shelter e'er so pure as this
 Beneath which earth and flowers sleep.

The giant limbs of forest kings
 In royal ermine robes I screen,
 Hang diamond pendants on the pines
 My children in their evergreen.

I check Ontario's waves of blue
 And still awhile their dancing grace
 With shining barriers, that are like
 A mystic veil drawn o'er her face.

And there with swift mysterious glide
 The skaters come, with daring skill,
 With glowing cheeks and flying feet
 Defy my breath their hearts to chill.

FATHER TIME.

Thy heart's not cold ; I do believe thee,
 Although with icy breath thou freeze me ;
 The work of love thy robes conceal
 The Spring's awakening will reveal.
 No wealth of Autumn could we own,
 No Summer path with roses strewn,
 Nor have the Spring's immortal green,
 If Winter did not lie between.
 The light of moon, the gold of star,
 The thought of "wise men from afar,"
 The everlasting hills outline.
 The sighing voices of the pine,
 The silent fields of stainless birth
 Unbroken yet by touch of earth.
 These scenes of Winter's night revealing
 Touch the heart with wondrous feeling.

FATHER TIME TO ALL THE SEASONS.

I love you all and with impartial eyes
In all, both worth and beauty, recognize.
With willing hearts the Master's will you've done,
From all, not one, the perfect year has come.

FATHER TIME TO THE AUDIENCE.

The Seasons thus to mortals teach ;
The task that is assigned to each
Must faithfully be done, for in that lies
The sweetest joy beneath the skies.

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